

GRADUAL NEGLIGENCE OF EXPOSITORY PREACHING IN THE 21ST
CENTURY CHURCHES IN AFRICA: CAUSES AND IMPLICATIONS

A Long Essay Submitted to the Department of Theology
The Faculty of Theological Studies
The Nigerian Baptist Theological
Seminary, Ogbomosho

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Award of Master of Divinity
in Theology

BY

Olusegun Stephen OLAOSUN
12/0137

JUNE, 2015

ABSTRACT

The causes and implications of gradual negligence of expository preaching in the 21st century African Churches is the concern of this research. Visiting many churches today to observe programs where the Word of God is preached, one discovers that the commitment to expository preaching method is on the average. In this 21st century, many people now prefer to hear motivational speakers, who are preaching from personal experience, and are only using the Scripture as a springboard and not necessarily preaching God's Word. The ripple effect is that there are preachers who are imposing strange ideas to a passage and congregations who are becoming more and more spiritually immature. In view of this the study attempted to explore the causes of the dearth of expository preaching method and the implications this is having on the preachers, the church and the society. The researcher believed that having this understanding will engender effective and efficient communication of the Word of God and help in raising viable Christian community. To achieve this, the researcher adopted a library based research work using resourceful materials such as literature, books, and journals available in the J.C. Pool Library of The Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso to determine, evaluate viewpoints on preaching from the past and the present, and to draw necessary inferences. Other materials were also sourced from the internet and audiotapes to complement the materials available in the library which has helped in validating the study. The findings of this research revealed that the expository preaching method is the best method to communicate God's Word in an impactful way. This researcher then recommended that the 21st century African Church Ministers should develop appropriate mandate, methodology and model for expository preaching method, be committed to personal development through having theological training, and also get the right orientation. It also stressed the need for spending quality time for planning and preparation of biblical sermon outlines and refused any personal quest for popularity.

5.2 CONCLUSION

This essay has focused its attention on unraveling the causes of neglecting expository preaching in the 21st century African churches and the implications on the gospel ministers, the Church and the society. This work is not intended to be an indictment of 21st century African Church preachers and preaching endeavour. There is no need denying the truth that there are preachers who can be considered to be great expositors. Many of this God's spokesperson are also concerned about the present trends. However, the point must be stated, that preachers are mostly the ones being

easily influenced by the challenge of this postmodern world. The good counsel therefore is that as ministers of the manifold grace of God, there is need to make the right choice. The choice is a disciplined commitment to expository preaching which would help create believers who are able to influence the society and bring about moral regeneration. This is because expository preaching does not impose a meaning on a passage, but instead it seeks a meaning from the passage.

Biblical preaching through exposition must for this reason be seen as one of the greatest tasks of gospel ministers. The aim of this type of preaching is for the spreading of the gospel to the whole world. 21st century African Church ministers must not only be passionate and positive but must also develop genuine love for the people of God. This will require a great deal of study time, meditation, reliance on the Holy Spirit, courage and boldness, and more importantly prayer (2 Timothy 2:15). Preachers must understand fully that the world needs to hear the true message, the Word of God. Because this Word is living and active preachers must therefore work hard at rightly and appropriately delivering the Message.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of this study, if the present situation will be rescued, the researcher wishes to make the following recommendations for the 21st century African Churches. Bearing in mind that this will be of help as preachers strive to achieve the purpose of God and engender transformation of lives in the Church and the community:

- 1 The 21st century African preachers must ensure personal development. In doing this, concerted effort must be made at developing appropriate mandate, methodology and model for doing expository preaching. This can come through thorough study of others who have excelled in this field of endeavour. There is the

need to also acquire qualitative theological education. Not only this, personal effort must be directed at getting resourceful material and to read wide in order to stay more informed, current, and enlightened. To be effective expositor, research, study, and meditation are not negotiable. In addition, every preacher must spend quality time in planning and preparation of expository sermon. This is because expository preaching cannot be achieved through a fire brigade approach. Adequate time for preparation must be in place.

2 There is the need for Bible Colleges, Seminaries, and other theological institution to develop curriculum in Christian preaching with emphasis on expository preaching for many lay preachers scattered across the continent at little or no cost. This will serves to encourage many of the lay preachers to acquire theological training in expository preaching.

3 The different denominations in Africa must design appropriate preaching policies that are in agreement with Biblical pattern of expository preaching. Such policy must be backed up with adequate and appropriate supervisory mechanism to ensure compliance by preachers. Also, avenue must be created from time to time for preachers to come together for training and development to enhance their competency.

Besides the above stated recommendation, the researcher also recommends a further study of this work in the area of the challenges associated with the delivery of expository preaching